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BRITISH SPY:

'Kim' Philby Traveled a Crooked Path

THE PHILBY CONSPIRACY, by Bruce Page, David Leitch, and Philip Knightley; Doubleday, \$5.95.

The story of H. A. R. "Kim" Philby is one of the most fascinating and destructive in the history of the British secret services. For nearly thirty years Philby and two lesser men, Guy Burgess and Donald Maclean, supplied the Soviet Union with information vital to British and American security.

What led these three men, born and educated in the secure world of the British Establishment, to betray their country for a land they had never seen and an ideology they did not fully understand? What was the nature of institutions that harbored such men and then protected them in the most incriminating of circumstances?

Many other questions come to mind, and the authors answer most of them adequately. However, the complete story may never be known. The missing pieces can be found in the files of the British secret services, the CIA, the Soviet KGB, and in the mind of Kim Philby himself. The facts that remain are used here to reproduce a story of deception that is far superior to fiction.

KIM PHILBY is the central figure of the book. His father was the eccentric St. John Philby, an adventurer who spent most of his life in Arabia. Educated at Cambridge, Kim Philby was exposed to the rising enthusiasm for Marxism that pervaded the campus in the early 1930's. His commitment to communism was completed during his years in Vienna, and the first of four wives was an active Communist. This background was ignored by his superiors when he started working for the government agencies. One wonders what qualifications were required at that time.

Having decided that he could best serve Mother Russia by penetrating the citadel rather than by openly fighting it, he divorced his first wife and started cultivating the facade his work required. He was quite successful.

At the height of his career, Philby was the director of the counter-Soviet department of the secret service. In this position he could mold policy and set up operations. How many agents were knowingly sent to their death by Kim Philby? How many operations failed because of him? We can only guess for Philby

had achieved a feat unequaled in the annals of espionage.

GUY BURGESS, a flagrant homosexual, and Donald Maclean, whose personality disintegrated under the pressures of his work,



'KIM' PHILBY

are included because of their close relationship with Philby. Their joint defection to Russia resulted in Philby being named as the "third man," the one who had notified Maclean that he was to be investigated.

The fact that he was cleared of these charges is, in retrospect, amazing. The decision was based on the fact that a British gentleman could not be a traitor. His superiors erred on the side of faith. Thus Kim Philby was allowed to continue his work until he finally followed Burgess and Maclean to Moscow.

The crooked path a man travels when he betrays his friends, class, and country is intriguing. The authors have done an excellent job of portraying the personality and deeds of one of the most powerful and damaging spies of the century.

—BARBARA HUESTON.

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